



The President's Daily Brief

25 July 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The situation in Cambodia is discussed on *Page 1*.

In Italy, efforts to form a center-left coalition continue to be frustrated and another minority government led by the Christian Democrats appears to be a likely short-term solution to the current crisis. (*Page 2*)

The French intend to review their relations with Libya in light of the recent Soviet arms delivery. (*Page 3*)

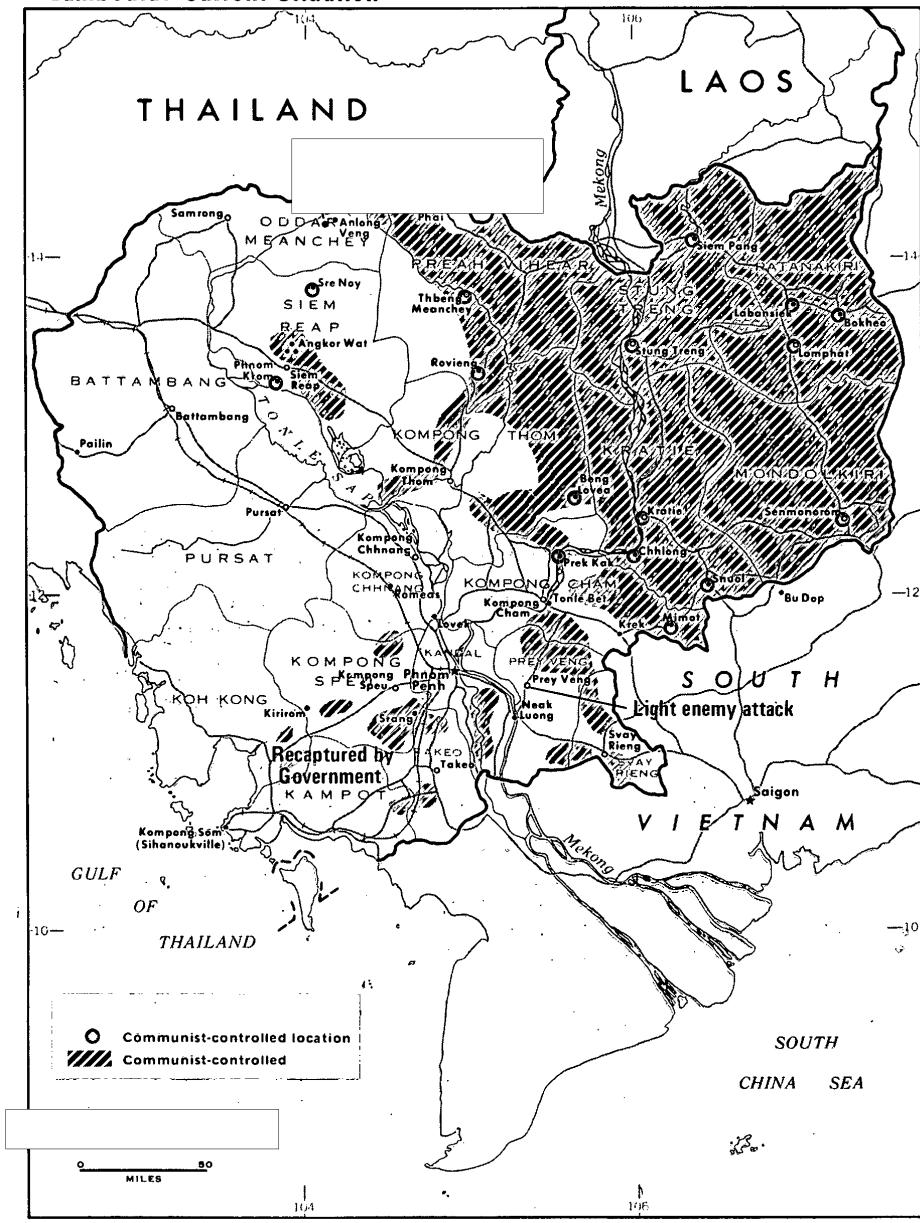
Soviet relief flights to Peru have ground to a halt. (*Page 4*)

The Somali Government has finally levied charges against the US survey ship *Midnight Sun*. (*Page 5*)

Brazilian authorities anticipate more attempts to kidnap foreign diplomats. (*Page 5*)

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Cambodia: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

The military situation is quiet throughout most of the country. Cambodian Army messages have indicated that government troops at Kirirom, in Kompong Speu Province, are short of food. Press reports state that government forces there are still surrounded and are being supplied by air.

In the west, government forces are continuing to evacuate posts in northeastern Oddar Meancheay Province.

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US military attachés recently visited Kompong Thom and Siem Reap cities and report the situation is calm and Cambodian Army morale high in both places.

The local [redacted] that the high losses the Communists have suffered are responsible for the current lull there. He added, however, that the enemy is now regrouping for fresh attacks.

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There are indications that Communist forces may be readying new attacks on Prey Veng and Svay Rieng cities. [redacted] there are four enemy battalions deployed southeast and northwest of Svay Rieng, and one enemy battalion has been sighted seven miles north of Prey Veng. Communist forces harassed a government position nine miles northwest of Prey Veng city on 23 July. Later the same day a company of enemy troops shelled the city but were driven off by strong government counterfire.

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ITALY

Persistent deep-seated disagreement between the two Socialist parties increases the possibility that the Christian Democrats will form an interim minority government. The Unitary Socialists claim that last month's elections demonstrated that the country is moving from left to center and showed popular approval of the anti-Communist position their party has taken. The orthodox Socialists, on the other hand, say the election results confirm their thesis that it is desirable to cooperate with the Italian Communist Party to bring it into the democratic life of the country.

In fact, neither party is justified in coming to any clear-cut conclusions on the basis of ambiguous election returns. Communist gains in the elections on the provincial level, for example, contrast with losses on the municipal and regional levels. Even the Socialist returns were inconclusive and subject to conflicting claims.

President Saragat may still ask some rising Christian Democrat to make another attempt at a four-party center-left coalition, but there is little evidence that a new premier-designate would do any better than Andreotti did this week. A three-party coalition is numerically possible, but the factionalized Christian Democrats would risk a serious split if they were to choose one of the Socialist parties over the other.

Political maneuvering usually comes to a halt in mid-August during Italy's traditional vacation period. This increases the likelihood that the Italians will take the easy way out and form a short-term minority government.

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FRANCE-LIBYA

The French are seriously concerned over the delivery of Soviet arms to Libya. The French ambassador to Libya will soon return home for consultations, and a French Foreign Ministry official says that the French will be taking a hard new look at the Libyan situation.

Paris justified its military assistance package to Libya last January--which included about 110 Mirage aircraft--by claiming it would keep the Soviets out of Libya. Obviously this has not worked, nor have French hopes for rapid cultural and economic expansion in Libya materialized. In fact, Libya has become increasingly xenophobic as exemplified in its crackdown on Italian property owners this week. Despite these setbacks and the current argument with Algeria over petroleum prices, Paris is likely to pursue its policy of establishing a strong French influence in countries bordering the Mediterranean.

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USSR-PERU

No Soviet transports have departed the USSR for Peru since 18 July, the day the AN-22 carrying a hospital and 23 technicians crashed off the coast of Greenland. According to the Soviet ambassador in Peru, his country's aid plans will now have to be changed somewhat because many of the Soviet medical personnel now in Peru will not have the necessary facilities. There has been no further information concerning future relief flights.

To date, 15 of the scheduled 65 cargo aircraft have arrived in Lima, most of which were filled to less than half capacity, presumably because of fuel needs and the long distances involved. Four of the 15 are back in the USSR and the others are on their way.

The relief activities continue to receive low-key official and press treatment in Peru. Publicity attendant upon the loss of the AN-22 and the constant delays that have plagued the airlift have robbed it of its dramatic impact.

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NOTES

Somalia: After four weeks delay, the military government has officially charged the US-owned geological survey ship Midnight Sun with violating Somali territorial and internal waters.

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Brazil: Police forces throughout the country are taking extensive security precautions in the expectation that terrorists will soon try to kidnap more foreign diplomats, particularly US, in exchange for imprisoned comrades.

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